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PP RUEHDU RUEHMR RUEHRN  
DE RUEHLU #0598/01 2181945  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 051945Z AUG 08  
FM AMEMBASSY LUANDA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4943  
INFO RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LUANDA 000598

SIPDIS

E FOR U/S JEFFERY  
DRL FOR MDAVIS  
PRM FOR MLANGE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/04/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [AO](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER CONCEDES "ERRORS" IN EXPELLING  
ILLEGAL CONGOLESE

REF: A. LUANDA 0593

- [1](#)B. HARTLEY-HARRIS E-MAIL 30JULY2008
- [1](#)C. LUANDA 0191
- [1](#)D. LUANDA 026
- [1](#)E. KINSHASA 0598

Classified By: AMB DAN MOZENA FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[¶](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: During a friendly, hour-long meeting with Ambassador Mozena on August 4th, Angolan Foreign Minister Joao Miranda highlighted the GRA's desire for deeper economic ties with the U.S., admitted "errors" in the conduct of expulsions of illegal Congolese immigrants, and downplayed a recent communique from his Ministry that suggested the GRA has security concerns regarding travel outside Luanda. Miranda said he expects the September 5 legislative elections to be peaceful and credible. Apologizing for the long delay since his last meeting with the U.S. Ambassador, Miranda suggested more frequent meetings. As the proof of the pudding is in the tasting, a skeptical Embassy withholds judgment as to whether Miranda will now be more accessible.  
END SUMMARY

In Search of Deeper Ties

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[¶](#)2. (SBU) Ambassador Mozena described the Mission's efforts since his January accreditation to work with the GRA to realize a vision of a peaceful, secure, democratic, healthy, and prosperous Angola, a vision that President dos Santos said he shared at the Ambassador's credentialing (reftel D). The Ambassador also called for early agreement on a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) to deepen economic ties. Mozena added that he hopes to explore with the GRA the possibility of establishing a Peace Corps program in Angola to teach English at the secondary school level. The Ambassador also called for deeper implementation of military IMET programs.

[¶](#)3. (SBU) Miranda expressed deep appreciation for the July 21-22 visit of U/S Reuben Jeffery. He noted the visit's importance and Jeffery's distinction as the highest-ranking visitor to Angola since 2002 and the highest American official ever to visit with the aim of deepening bilateral economic cooperation. Noting that the U.S. remains Angola's largest investor through its massive commitments in the oil and gas sectors, Miranda hoped Jeffery would carry the message that Angola is looking for other forms of investment and economic diversification. Miranda said the GRA is studying possible development of exports of fish, bananas, and pineapple to the U.S., and stressed the key role that the U.S.-Angola Chamber of Commerce should continue to play in promoting investment in Angola. Ambassador Mozena cited Chiquita's recent investment in banana exports (reftel C), which will directly and indirectly create over 11,000 new

jobs, as an example of ways in which U.S. investment benefits Angola.

"Errors Made" on Congolese Expulsions

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¶ 14. (C) Ambassador Mozena emphasized that Angola's negative image overseas is a barrier to U.S. investment. Reports of severe human rights violations, such as those reported during mass expulsions of illegal Congolese immigrants (reftel E), mar Angola's reputation. In response to the Ambassador's call for a swift, transparent, and public investigation of the allegations, Miranda acknowledged "procedural errors" were made in the expulsions. He said GRA policies require that, prior to the execution of major expulsion campaigns, consulate and Embassy personnel from affected countries be invited as witnesses to verify the conditions in which their citizens are treated by Angolan authorities. Understaffed border police have asked military units to help conduct expulsions, and the military units "unfortunately disregarded the rules," according to Miranda.

¶ 15. (C) Miranda said he "might agree" that some excessive force was used in the expulsions, but considers reports of violations "overstated." He further asserted that refugees who arrive in Angola with no belongings should expect to leave the same way, and that the GRA has a right to search expellees for diamonds that cannot legally leave Angola. In his view it was regrettable that procedures were not followed in these expulsions, as it makes it difficult for the GRA to "defend itself" from the accusations of international human rights organizations.

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No Security Concerns for Elections

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¶ 16. (SBU) Turning to the September 5 legislative elections, Miranda expressed his belief that the elections will be peaceful and credible. He was pleased to hear that the Embassy had received an official invitation from the National Electoral Commission to be credentialed as election observers. Miranda said President dos Santos is likely to remain in-country following the elections to stand up the new government; by law the new assembly must convene 30 days after election results are announced. Though a final decision has yet to be made, this circumstance may preclude dos Santos' attendance at the September opening of the UN General Assembly.

¶ 17. (C) Ambassador Mozena reiterated the importance that peaceful, credible elections will play in showing the world the progress Angola has made in six years of peace. The Ambassador noted that a recent diplomatic note (reftel B) from the Ministry, which requests all diplomatic missions and international organizations to notify the Foreign Ministry (MIREX) three working days prior to all travel by any staff member outside of Luanda so MIREX can ensure security, suggests the GRA has security concerns surrounding the elections. Miranda quickly downplayed the note and denied any security issues, only concern for proper protocol procedures. He said provincial governors have complained to MIREX that many Ambassadors are traveling to the provinces without notification to or courtesy calls with local government officials. He stressed the note was intended strictly for high-level provincial visits. Even a phone call to the America's desk would suffice, he continued. NOTE: Miranda has a history of downplaying the importance of protocol issues, and the MIREX Protocol Office in turn is known use protocol as a means to obstruct diplomatic engagement. We believe the Protocol Office may be the source of this dipnote. Until we receive instruction from Washington, we will interpret the note as Miranda indicated - applicable only to official travel for the Ambassador, DCM, and USAID Mission Director. END NOTE

¶8. (C) COMMENT: Although warm and substantive, the meeting was many months overdue. Miranda's apology for the delay seemed sincere; less certain is the sincerity of his offer for more frequent bilateral exchange. If the Foreign Minister truly wants to deepen relations with the U.S., the American Ambassador should not have to wait another 8 months for their next private meeting. END COMMENT  
MOZENA